



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America: Progress

Canada, Mexico and the United States share a continued commitment to enhance the security, prosperity and quality of life of our citizens within North America. We recognize that the success of our countries is enhanced by working cooperatively. The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America, which celebrates its first anniversary this month, provides a framework for us to advance collaboration in areas as diverse as security, transportation, the environment and public health.

This Partnership has increased our institutional contacts to respond to our vision of a stronger, more secure, and more prosperous region. In June 2005, our three governments released detailed work-plans identifying key initiatives that form an ambitious agenda of collaboration. Since June, we have worked to implement these initiatives. Many will take months or years to be completed, but we already note significant results. We ask our Ministers to build on this momentum.

We have discussed how we can ensure North America is the most economically dynamic region in the world and a secure home for our citizens. Today, we exchanged views with private sector leaders on how to enhance the competitiveness of North America.

Building on existing commitments, we agree that priority initiatives warrant special attention in the coming year:

Strengthening Competitiveness in North America. We are pleased to announce the creation of a North American Competitiveness Council (NACC). The Council will comprise members of the private sector from each country and will provide us recommendations on North American competitiveness, including, among others, areas such as automotive and transportation, steel, manufacturing, and services. The Council will meet annually with security and prosperity Ministers and will engage with senior government officials on an ongoing basis.

We are convinced that regulatory cooperation advances the productivity and competitiveness of our nations and helps to protect our health, safety and environment. For instance, cooperation on food safety will help protect the public while at the same time facilitate the flow of goods. We affirm our commitment to strengthen regulatory cooperation in this and other key sectors and to have our central regulatory agencies complete a trilateral regulatory cooperation framework by 2007.

North American Emergency Management. A disaster - whether natural or man-made - in one of our countries can have consequences across national borders. Our vision for a North American response, relief and recovery strategy would ensure that critical equipment, supplies and personnel can be deployed expeditiously throughout North America. We commit to develop a common approach to critical infrastructure protection, coordinated responses to cross border incidents, and coordinated training and exercises, with the participation of all levels of government in our countries.

Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza. Given the highly integrated nature of our economies, an outbreak of pathogenic avian flu or human pandemic influenza in any one of our countries would affect us all. Today, we have agreed to develop a comprehensive, science-based and coordinated approach within North America to avian influenza and human pandemic influenza management. We have endorsed a set of shared principles to underpin cooperative activities by our Governments in all stages of avian influenza and human pandemic influenza management: prevention; preparedness; response; and recovery. Pursuant to these principles, officials will develop, as an immediate priority, incident management protocols to ensure that we are well prepared in advance of an outbreak in North America. For instance, we have agreed to work together to accelerate research, development, production, and availability of human pandemic influenza vaccines, and develop a strategy to best facilitate the sharing of information to enhance the availability of vaccines to the region. We will also establish a small Coordinating Body of senior officials to ensure follow-up on these commitments.

North American Energy Security. A sustainable, secure and affordable supply of energy is key to fueling the North American economy. Collaboration in the areas of innovation, energy efficiency, and technology development, including moving these technologies to market, promotes energy security. Our governments renew their commitment to trilateral cooperation on clean energy technologies, conservation, and market facilitation as a means to meeting our shared goals of energy security and sustainable development. Officials will also examine how this cooperation can be expanded to further our climate efforts.

North American Smart, Secure Borders. Our vision is to have a border strategy that results in the fast, efficient and secure movement of low-risk trade and travelers to and within North America, while protecting us from threats including terrorism. In implementing this strategy, we will encourage innovative risk-based approaches to improving security and facilitating trade and travel. These include close coordination on infrastructure investments and vulnerability assessments, screening and processing of travelers, baggage and cargo, a single integrated North American trusted traveler program, and swift law enforcement responses to threats posed by criminals or terrorists, including advancing a trilateral network for the protection of judges and officers.

The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America represents a broad and ambitious agenda. We instruct our Ministers to develop options to strengthen the SPP and present them next June as part of the second report on progress of the SPP.

President Fox and President Bush were pleased to accept, on behalf of their countries, Prime Minister Harper's invitation to host the next trilateral leaders meeting in Canada in 2007.

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